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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

POL 33-1 MEX-US
MEX-2271

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 15, 1963

SUBJECT: Current Bilateral Problems Between U.S. and Mexico

FEB 21 1963

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Antonio Carrillo Flores, Ambassador to Mexico.
Mr. Robert M. Sayre, CMA

COPIES TO: CMA
ARA
CMA/M (2) (1 cc)
US-IBWC
INR (8)
Ambassy, Mexico City (2 - 1 cc)

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1. The Ambassador began by referring to the conversation he had just had with Assistant Secretary Martin on the delivery of minesweepers to Mexico. He said he had talked to Foreign Minister Tello who agreed that he could inform the United States that it was reasonable for the United States to expect that the use of the minesweepers by Mexico would not create any difficulties for the United States Government. (Mr. Martin had discussed with the Ambassador reports that the Mexican Government might use the minesweepers which it was acquiring from the United States for enforcing its fishing regulations and had emphasized the embarrassment it would cause the United States Government if the minesweepers were used for this purpose).

2. The Ambassador inquired whether there were any new developments looking toward a solution of the salinity problem on the lower Colorado River. Mr. Sayre said that the Bureau of Reclamation had not completed its engineering study but it was expected to do so very soon and that we anticipated a report around March 1. He said that there had been meetings between the White House and Interior on the subject but that he was not aware of the exact outcome of these meetings. He could only say that the matter is being followed very closely by the White House in keeping with the statement in the Joint Communiqué of June 30, 1962.

3. The Ambassador

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3. The Ambassador referred to the Mexican offer to settle the Sabolo claim and inquired whether the claimants had settled their tax problems with the United States Government. Mr. Sayre said that the lawyers for the claimants planned to discuss the problem with the Department's lawyers on February 18.

4. Mr. Sayre said that Ambassador Mann would be discussing the Chamizal problem with interested persons in Texas beginning February 18. He hoped that the informal understanding on a line reached between Ambassador Mann and the Foreign Minister would be acceptable to El Paso.

5. The Ambassador referred to the political situation in Mexico and to a short item in U.S. News and World Report to the effect that Diaz Ordaz, now Minister of Government, is the front-running candidate for the next President of Mexico. The item had stated that Diaz Ordaz was anti-communist and pro-American. The Ambassador said he had talked to the magazine's reporter in Mexico about the item and had passed on comments he had heard that it might have been planted by enemies of Diaz Ordaz. He said Mr. Migdail had told him that he had filed a lengthy report on Mexico in which Diaz Ordaz had been mentioned as the leading candidate. This was the only part of his report that his editors had seen fit to publish so far. The Ambassador considered the political situation in Mexico tranquil. He expounded the PRI philosophy that the party had to keep the leftist elements within the PRI if political tranquility is to be maintained. He observed that Lopez Mateos had to act with caution during this period before the elections in 1964 to avoid upsetting the political situation. The Ambassador thought that the next President of Mexico would be more to the center. He acknowledged that President Lopez Mateos was left of center and thought we could now expect a swing back toward the center. He considered Cardenas to be outside the PRI because Cardenas had put himself outside the official party. He considered the newly-formed CCI of little consequence and thought its formation would have gone unnoticed except for the presence of Cardenas at the inaugural sessions. He considered Maldonado, ex-Governor of Baja California, to be a politician of no consequence. He hoped that the Government would not have to act against Cardenas and the CCI, but, if it did, he thought the move would be against Cuauhtémoc Cardenas. He said Alejandro Carrillo was close to the President. He characterized Carrillo as a Marxist and exponent of the view that Mexico should move closer to the neutralist countries. Thus Carrillo had urged that Mexico participate in the Belgrade Conference. Mr. Sayre said his problem with the so-called neutralists was that they were not neutral but heaped criticism on the United States while praising the Soviet Union or at least not saying anything critical. The Ambassador agreed.

6. The Ambassador said he was holding conversations with the Director of the Smithsonian Institution for the purpose of arranging for an exhibition of Mexican art in the fall of 1963 or winter of 1964. It is

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the same exhibit which has been touring Europe. He hoped to arrange for an exhibition in other major cities in the United States. If a showing could be arranged at the National Gallery he hoped that it could be opened by the President. Mrs. Lopez Mateos (or possibly the Foreign Minister or Minister of Education) would come to the United States for the occasion. In view of the nature of the art exhibit, the Ambassador thought the only appropriate place for its showing in Washington would be the National Gallery. He thought January 1964 might be an appropriate time, but recognized that this was an especially busy time for the President. He also planned to discuss October or November 1963 as possibilities with the Director of the Smithsonian Institution.

7. The Ambassador referred to the proposed trip of President Lopez Mateos to France, Western Germany, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Poland. He said that his President was concerned that a trip to France at this time might be misunderstood in the United States. Mr. Sayre said that he did not think it would give rise to any particular misunderstanding. The Ambassador said that when President Lopez Mateos talked to him about the trip he had not mentioned all of the countries at once but had led him through a discussion of the problems vis-a-vis the United States of each country. He said he had inquired of the President why he had to go to Poland. He got essentially two reasons: 1) President Lopez Mateos wanted to visit Poland to see for himself how things are there and 2) visits to such countries are useful for demonstrating Mexico's independence of the United States. The Ambassador thought Mexico's views carried more weight in international meetings and was actually helpful to the United States if it had a reputation of being independent. He said the Mexican Congress would be called to approve the trip.

(The Ambassador made no suggestion at all that the visit might be expanded to include the Soviet Union. Rather, his comments emphasized that the countries were carefully chosen to give a balanced trip, taking into account Mexico's domestic and foreign policies.)

8. The Ambassador said that the Foreign Minister was definitely interested in a convention with the United States which would end the dispute over shrimp fishing in the Gulf. He thought Mr. Sayre had drawn the wrong conclusion from the fact that the Foreign Minister had evidenced no interest in a convention when it was discussed during the visit of President Kennedy to Mexico in June 1962 and in conversations last week between Ambassador Mann and the Foreign Minister. He said that Tello wanted to maintain the "tradition" of the Foreign Office and was reluctant to take any steps that might modify Mexican policy. Tello did not want to agree to anything which might adversely affect Mexico's claim to a nine-mile territorial sea. For this reason the Ambassador said he had discussed the matter with Undersecretary Gorostiza who represents the "tradition" of the Foreign Office. Gorostiza

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found no problem with the line the Ambassador was following. The Ambassador said he had told Tello there was no point talking about a fisheries convention if Mexico tried to settle the territorial waters problems in the convention. He had urged that a convention deal only with conservation of fishing resources and that it contain a paragraph which said it in no way affected the position on territorial waters held by either country. On the other hand, the Ambassador said that the convention should give Mexico exclusive control over fisheries out to nine miles. He suggested that the convention which the United States signed with Cuba in 1958 seemed to provide a useful model for an agreement between the US and Mexico. He planned to suggest that an exploratory meeting be held in Mexico City soon to see whether there was a basis for reaching agreement. He hoped that Mr. Chayes would be able to come down on the US Delegation.

Mr. Sayre observed that the Lopez Mateos Administration would probably go down in Mexican History as the one to clear up all outstanding problems with the United States if we succeeded in clearing up all the problems we had discussed. The Ambassador said he had told the Mexican President the same thing and hoped that it proved to be correct.

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